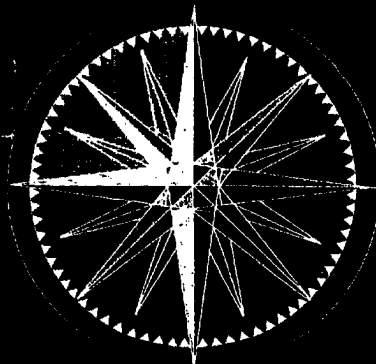


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SPECIAL REPORT

THE TOP MILITARY MEN IN COMMUNIST CHINA

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

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THE TOP MILITARY MEN IN COMMUNIST CHINA

Peiping has completely revamped its military leadership during the past five years, replacing advocates of professionalism with party stalwarts blindly loyal to Mao Tse-tung. The purge--quiet but thorough--began with the dismissal in 1959 of Minister of National Defense Marshal Peng Te-huai. Although the reasons for Peng's downfall are not fully known, evidence that became available as the Sino-Soviet dispute worsened leaves little doubt that he was removed mainly for contesting Mao's decision to challenge the Soviets. Peng undoubtedly argued in favor of making political concessions to ensure the continuation of Soviet military aid, which was vital to the Chinese program of rapid military modernization.

The three top military men today were all appointed after Peng's dismissal. They are Marshal Lin Piao, minister of national defense, who apparently is one of the few senior military men fully trusted by Mao; Senior General Lo Jui-ching, a former security officer who became chief of staff; and Colonel General Hsiao Hua, head of the General Political Department, the central committee department responsible for ensuring political control over the army.

The military qualifications of the upper echelon of military officers are not impressive. They are primarily party watchdogs, and few played an important role in the Korean war, Communist China's single major experience with modern warfare. They are getting old, and Lin Piao is a chronic invalid, but, even so, there is a marked reluctance to promote younger men into the top rank.

The 1959 Purge

The Chinese Communists have never officially admitted that a purge took place. In fact, however, Peiping was very seriously concerned over military attempts to challenge party leadership in 1959. This concern was clearly reflected in secret military documents captured in 1961, which re-

vealed that Peng Te-huai and his chief of staff, Huang Ko-cheng, had been formally charged with having led an "antiparty conspiracy."

It is not clear whether Peng ever seriously worked to overthrow Mao, as some of the documents seemed to imply, or whether he merely went too far

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in his efforts to persuade Mao to moderate his policies, especially those jeopardizing Soviet military commitments to China. The Chinese Communists revealed in 1963 that the Soviets in 1958 had sought to exercise control over military equipment being supplied to China. Peng Te-huai undoubtedly urged Mao to make at least temporary concessions on this issue, but the Soviet cancellation of a nuclear weapons aid agreement in June 1959, also revealed by Peiping in 1963, indicates that Peng was unsuccessful. The fact that Peng was right in predicting that continued Chinese adamancy would lead to major Soviet sanctions did not save him. Reportedly he was denounced for "antiparty activities" at closed sessions of a central committee plenum convened in August 1959, and in September 1959 he was officially dismissed as minister of national defense.

Many other senior military officers were dismissed or demoted at about the same time, and it is assumed that most were either implicated with Peng or at least suspected of sharing his misgivings over Maoist policies. Besides Peng's co-conspirator Huang Ko-cheng, they included the army's top political officer, Tan Cheng, as well as two vice ministers of national defense, the political officer in the air force, and the head of the Rear Services Department.

Peiping has tried hard to maintain the official fiction that no breakdown in rapport between the military and the party occurred. It has never announced the dismissal of Tan Cheng, which is known only from the captured secret documents. Peng Te-huai himself officially retains his politburo standing. Neither Tan Cheng nor Huang Ko-cheng was officially dropped from the party secretariat until the tenth central committee plenum in September 1962, and, like Peng, both retain their membership on the central committee.

Not surprisingly, replacements for the purged men have been selected on the basis of political, rather than military, criteria. Probably the chief requirements are that they be personally acceptable to Mao and share his convictions about the correctness of "go it alone" policies and the need for strong party domination over the military. In selecting a new team, the party leadership avoided men who had close associations with Peng Te-huai. This discriminated against men who had served in the Korean war, when Peng commanded the Chinese forces. The appointment of the tubercular Lin Piao to replace Peng indicated that poor health was no bar. This was also shown by the appointment of Marshal Lo Jung-huan, a former head of the General Political Department who,

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despite his long record of illness, was brought out of retirement to replace Tan Cheng. Lo died in 1963.

The New Team

Marshal Lin Piao, the minister of national defense, is much closer to Mao than Peng Tehuai ever was. Lin is a highly respected military officer, whose chief role apparently is to lend the prestige of his name to the effort to strengthen Mao's prestige and authority in the armed forces. His writings on such subjects as the importance of indoctrinated soldiers over weapons are said to be "creative developments" of Mao's own thinking, and are used for indoctrination purposes.

Lin himself has not been able to lead a fully active pub-



LIN PIAO

lic life since World War II, because of a chronic tubercular condition. Reportedly he has spent years in sanatoria, including a period for treatment in the USSR shortly after 1945. His health may have improved somewhat in 1958. Early in 1959 his public appearances became more frequent, and the party leadership apparently felt he was well enough to replace Peng later that year. Since then, however, he has had a relapse. A Burmese general who interviewed him in late 1960 reported that he did not look at all well. Lin admitted then that he could work only a short time daily. This is the last time Lin was seen at close hand by a non-Communist observer. He has appeared in public only twice since 1961--brief ceremonial appearances at funerals of fellow marshals.

The high party and military posts Lin holds nevertheless give him a measure of power. He is on the Politburo Standing Committee, the party's top policy-making body. He is ranking vice chairman of the Military Affairs Committee (MAC), a special Central Committee department which formulates military policy, subject only to the approval of the Politburo Standing Committee. Membership on the MAC is limited to Lin Piao, five other marshals, and possibly Mao, who may be chairman. This arrangement enables the top leadership to make military decisions in the name of the Central Committee without having to consult any civilians below the Standing Committee.

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Senior General Lo Jui-ching, despite his subordinate position, probably exercises greater military influence than Lin Piao. Although not a well-known figure, the tough and vigorous Lo is in some respects the most powerful military man in Communist China today. As secretary general of the Military Affairs Committee he plays a major role in formulating military policy and in deciding appointments and dismissals. With typical secrecy Peiping has never publicized Lo's MAC connection, which is known only from the secret documents captured in 1961. Lo is also on the party secretariat, to which he was appointed in 1962.

In addition to his position as the chief of staff, Lo Jui-ching functions as de facto commander of the armed forces. For example, it is Lo rather than the ailing Lin Piao who presides over important military meetings, reviews troops, and issues major military statements.

Although a graduate of China's foremost military academy at Whampoa, Lo apparently never commanded troops, but spent his entire career before 1959 in political and security work. He was Peiping's first minister of public security, holding that post while concurrently commanding the Public Security Forces from 1949 to 1959.

Lo Jui-ching, with his considerable power in the security



LO JUI-CHING

apparatus as well as the armed forces, probably would have a crucial role in any struggle for the succession. Among the potential contenders, his political allegiance appears to lie with the militant Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping rather than with the more moderate Chou En-lai. His association with Teng seems particularly close. In the late 1950s, as minister of public security, Lo probably worked under the general direction of Teng, who was then deeply involved in matters of security and party purity. Indeed, he may have been Teng's personal choice for chief of staff.

Colonel General Hsiao Hua was named in September 1964 to the key post of director of the General Political Department (GPD), the organization

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responsible for maintaining party primacy in the armed forces. The GPD operates a powerful security and indoctrination apparatus under which political officers or commissars are assigned to all military units down to the company level. Hsiao Hua has been the leading spokesman of the GPD since 1960 and became its acting head when Lo Jung-huan died last December. Hsiao is also deputy secretary of the MAC, under Lo Jui-ching, or at least he was in 1961, according to secret military documents.

Only 49 years old, Hsiao is a comer--if his health holds out. He has been unexplainably out of public view since February 1964, missing several important military functions including a GPD meeting in November presided over by Mao himself, at which Hsiao's presence would seem to have been mandatory. An unusual announcement in September confirming that Hsiao headed the GPD, a job he has performed for some time, perhaps was made to forestall questions, raised by his prolonged absence, about his standing.

Prospects for Party-Military Frictions

There is no current evidence of open resistance to party policies in the armed forces. The



HSIAO HUA

last suggestion of such resistance was a reported purge in 1962 of air force officers who were disgruntled over the growing obsolescence of their equipment. Early in 1964, however, Peiping officially commended the air force for having overcome a problem of "realist" ideology--a sign of party satisfaction that dissension in this branch of service had been at least temporarily stamped out.

Although any present opposition is silent, Peiping apparently suspects that some high military officers still have reservations about present policies. Articles published last spring indicated that the General Political Department was carrying out a heavy program of political study for officers

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NAME	AGE	PARTY STANDING	KEY POSITIONS	COMMENTS
MARSHAL LIN PIAO	56	Member, Politburo Standing Committee; Vice Chairman, CC	Ranking Vice Chairman, MAC; Minister of National Defense	Though chronically ill, retains his position because of prestige and closeness to Mao Tse-tung
SENIOR GENERAL LO JUI-CHING	57	Member, CC	Secretary-General, MAC; Member, Secretariat of CC; Chief of Staff, PLA	Formerly top security officer, now de facto military chief
COLONEL GENERAL HSIAO HUA	49	Member, CC	Deputy, Secretary-General, MAC; Director, General Political Dept of the CC; Deputy Secretary, Control Commission of the CC	Party spokesman for the military, who has risen rapidly
MARSHAL NIEH JUNG-CHEN	65	Member, CC	Vice Chairman, MAC, Chair- man, Science and Technology Commission of the State Council	Administers the nuclear and mis- sile programs. Worked under Chou En-lai for most of his career
MARSHAL YEH CHIEN-YING	66	Member, CC	Vice Chairman, MAC; Possibly Director, Training Dept, PLA	Responsible for troop training, makes frequent inspections of military units
MARSHAL HSU HSIANG-CHEN	64	Member, CC	Vice Chairman, MAC	Inactive, probably retired
MARSHAL LIU PO-CHENG	72	Member, Politburo	Vice Chairman, MAC	Inactive, probably retired
MARSHAL HO LUNG	68	Member, Politburo	Vice Chairman, MAC; Chairman, Physical Culture and Sports Commission	Tasks appear to be largely ceremonial; makes frequent public appearances and occasional good will trips abroad
SENIOR GENERAL HSU KUANG-TA	62	Member, CC	Vice Minister of National Defense; Commander, Armored Force, PLA	
COLONEL GENERAL LIU YA-LOU	58	Member, CC	Vice Minister of National Defense; Commander, Air Force, PLA	Essentially a political adminis- trator, he has headed the air force since its inception, surviving the 1959 purge of Peng Te-huai, termin- ation of Soviet military aid in 1960 and a purge of the air force in 1962
SENIOR ADMIRAL HSIAO CHING-KUANG	64	Member, CC	Vice Minister of National Defense; Commander, Navy, PLA	
COLONEL GENERAL YANG YUNG	58	Alternate Member, CC	Commander, Paiping Military Region; Deputy Chief of Staff, PLA	

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at the regimental level and above, "to strengthen their understanding of the ideology of Mao Tse-tung." They were told to study not only Marxist classics and the works of Mao, but also the "foolish" statements of "modern revisionists," suggesting that a major aim is to convince senior officers of the absolute correctness of Mao's position in the Sino-Soviet dispute.

According to Peiping, special attention is being given to the political activities of officers above the division level. These officers, mostly generals, now are required to give periodic political lectures, "to improve their working style." Presumably, they are expected to use these lectures as occasions for reaffirming their commitment to Mao and the party line.

Military resistance to party domination probably is not serious now. Most military officers with independent views have been removed or intimidated in the purges and indoctrination drives of the past five years. Moreover, China's first nuclear test and Viet Cong suc-

cesses might seem to vindicate two major Maoist policies-- "self-reliance" and the stress on guerrilla warfare techniques --objected to by "professional" military men.

Nevertheless, there is long-standing discontent over party domination, especially among younger officers, and this is expected to grow over time. Prospects for promotion are poor. The party distrusts younger men who were not steeled in the civil war, and as a result has insisted on waiving retirement regulations for general officers. Party interference, excessive indoctrination, the one-sided stress on Mao's military doctrines, and consequent downplaying of modern military concepts probably are disliked and resented by many officers. There are undoubtedly some who question the party's strategy of challenging both the US and the USSR from a position of such comparative weakness. The growth of resentment over such issues will be difficult to prevent, because the control methods the party relies on--direct party domination and stepped-up indoctrination--are themselves major causes of resentment. ~~(SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)~~

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